

REMARKS

It is noted that Claims 1-18 are pending in the application. Claims 2-4 and 12 were withdrawn from consideration as directed to a nonelected invention. Those claims have been canceled subject to filing a continuation application directed thereto.

Claims 6-9, 11, and 13-18 were objected to as being allowable but depending from rejected claims. Claims 6, 8, 11, and 13 have been placed in independent form. The remaining claims objected to depend from amended Claims 6, 8, 11, and 13. Those claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and their allowance is respectfully requested.

The rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh in view of Chung is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to define a jet conduit configured to circulate the pulp in a closed loop. Neither Marsh nor Chung disclose a jet drier of this type. Neither Marsh nor Chung suggest using such a jet drier in combination with a supply station to deliver a crosslinker to the pulp and to dry and singulate the fibers and thereafter separate the fibers from the outlet air from the jet drier. It is submitted that in view of the foregoing amendment the Examiner has not set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness over the Marsh and Chung references.

The rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh in view of Harding is respectfully traversed. Claim 10 depends from Claim 1. Therefore, the arguments set forth above are applicable. In addition, the Examiner contends that Harding discloses a pulp feed device as shown in Figure 5. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is in error. If the Examiner refers to Harding, Col. 18, lines 15 *et seq.* it will become clear that Figure 5 discloses not a pulp *feed* device but a *separator* that separates bitumen particles from sand particles to give a clean sand bed for use in the Harding device. Harding in no way discloses a pulp feed device that includes a rotary airlock having rotor vanes and that can minimize air flow through the pulp supply station. It is therefore submitted that the Examiner has not set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness over the Marsh and Harding references.

Finally, the rejection of Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marsh in view of Kurtz is respectfully traversed. The Examiner is requested to re-read Claim 5. In Claim 5, the pulp station is further defined as including a first dewatering device and a second dewatering device. The treatment supply source delivers a treatment substance to the dewatered supply pulp prior to entry into the second dewatering device. While Kurtz does disclose a pair of screw presses in series that function as first and second dewatering devices, it is respectfully submitted that neither Kurtz nor Kurtz in combination with Marsh suggest supplying the

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treatment substance, in this case a crosslinking agent, between first and second dewatering devices. It is therefore submitted that the Examiner has not set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness in view of the Marsh and Kurtz references.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reexamine the application, to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of all the claims, and to promptly allow the case and pass it to issue. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the foregoing amendments or remarks, he is invited to call applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

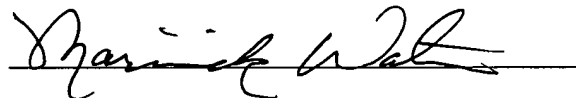
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the below date.

Date: July 24, 2003



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